

The Blessed Man

Text: Psalm One

I think God has placed within each of us the desire to be blessed. Much has been written about the prayer of Jabez found in Chronicles 4 as he asked the Lord to bless him. Even the rugged, non-spiritual, Esau, cried when he found he had been robbed of his father's blessing. The Aaronic benediction is one of my favorite passages. Numbers 6:24-26 [read] I believe every player of the SF Giant and Oakland A's wants to win today. How many of you woke up this morning hoping you would really fail today. I want to get a speeding ticket today. I can't wait to receive a telephone call from my boss telling me that my work is substandard. How many of you men wish your wife would say to you today, "you're such a loser?"

Maybe we should consider the definition of the word blessing. Sometimes we don't recognize a blessing when it comes. 30 years ago I had the privilege of hearing Dr. Warren Wiersbe, who was at that time pastor of Moody Memorial Church speak at a men's conference.

He said that one day a blessing came to him at 90 miles an hour. He was hit by a drunk driver. After many surgeries and a long convalesce he said, "I wouldn't have missed it for the world." Then he gave this definition of a blessing. ***A blessing is something that brings out the best in you and takes the worst out of you and brings glory to God.*** That could be losing a job. To keep some jobs might destroy your faith, your family, and your integrity. It might be a failed relationship.

In my early years of ministry I would often pray, "Lord bless me, use me." Later I realized I was praying the wrong prayer. I began praying Lord make me useable, make me blessable. I realized that changes needed to take place in me if I were to receive the blessing of God. That's what Psalm One is about. The kind of person that God blesses. On this father's day we can see what kind of man the Lord blesses. Let's notice three qualities that person possesses.

I. A recognition of separation (set apart)

I will not walk in the counsel of the wicked, v.1 the enticement of evil people. I will not stand in the way of the sinners, v.1 The company of wrong doers. I will not sit in the way of mockers, v.1 the corrosive influence of the cynical. Now it's very important that we understand separation. It's not all negative, a grand list of all the things I don't do. My daughter used to live across the street from 1000's of people who didn't smoke, drink liquor, gamble, watch pornography, steal, lie, or commit adultery. They just didn't

do any of those things. She lived across the street from a cemetery in Colma. Just because they didn't do those things didn't mean they were separated.

Paul gave us a wonderful image for separation in Romans 1:1 separated unto the Gospel of God. It is a positive separation. When I was a boy in Arkansas I had a bag of marbles. Two or three of them were "shooters." I also had a dip in my finger nail from shooting marbles. One day a group of boys came and said, "Do you want to play a game of football?" Well, I made a game saving tackle and that was the end of marbles for me. I had graduated into another game.

Some Christians think that separation is segregation or isolation. Don't get close to them! is their motto. If that's true then Jesus blew it. He ate with and touched moral misfits and outcasts. One day he spoke to Levi (Matthew) and said "Follow Me." Levi was a publican, a hated tax collector. Soon after Levi gave a great party for his friends and he invited Jesus. Some look at it and say, it was his farewell party, his goodbye party to the boys. Maybe it was his "Hello Party" so that he could introduce them to his new found Savior. I can almost hear Jesus say, "Hello men, it's great to meet you.

Separation from the world is a conscious decision to not allow the world to tarnish our life for Jesus. We see in I John 2:15-17 there's an invisible world system that uses visible things that seek to turn the believer from following the will of God. It's not always easy to recognize what is happening. Sometimes it's good things we need to give up. Hobbies, children, grandchildren, position and possessions might be the hindering factors in our lives.

II Corinthians 6:14-18 presents questions to the child of God. These questions help us to discern which choice to make.

- What does a child of God have in common? v. 14 A business term.
- What fellowship? A family term.
- What harmony? v. 15 A musical term.
- What agreement? v. 16 A political term.

Other verses that are helpful in detecting separation are: Romans 12:2; James 4:4, 1:27, 2:15, and I Cor. 11:32. The life of Lot in the book of Genesis shows the lack of God's blessing. It gives phrases like: Lot looked toward, pitched his tent toward, visited, stayed, sat with the elders, suffered from the judgment, all he lived for went up in smoke.

II. An appreciation of the Word of God. V.2

Some believe that Psalm One is the last of the Psalms to be written. It is the

introduction to the Book of Psalms, i.e. The Preface. It is claiming that there is a good life available to those who love God's word and an awful destiny to those who discard the Word of God.

What does the word meditate mean? Muttering in a low voice as they read the torah. Another word picture is cows masticating their food, chewing the cud. Or the lion standing over his prey saying Wow! The longest Psalm in the Bible is about the Word of God. Psalm 119 [The communicator can choose a number of verses to support the value and beauty of the Word of God] Thy word is a light unto my feet, Psalm 119:105

How can a young man keep his way pure? Psalm 119: 9. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:11

Other superlatives of God's Word are:

- v. 14 great riches,
- v. 23 princes (powerful people)
- v. 62 more than sleep
- v. 103 sweeter than honey
- v. 147-148 awake in the night

As far as I can figure out the only thing I can take with me when I die is the knowledge of the word of God. Practice spiritual separation, appreciation of the Bible and, maintain a location of nearness. This is more a process of becoming. The tree is a favorite metaphor. Ps. 92:12-14, Jere. 17:5-8, Gen. 49:22, John 7:38-39

I like the way Eugene Peterson paraphrases this passage.

How well God must like you don't hang out at Sin Saloon, you don't slink along Dead-Eden Road, you don't go to Smart-Mouth College.

Instead you thrill to God's Word, you chew on Scripture day and night.

You're a tree replanted in Eden, bearing fresh fruit every month,

Never dropping a leaf, always in blossom.

You're not at all like the wicked, who are mere windblown dust.

Without defense in court, unfit company for innocent people.

God charts the road you take.

The road they take is Skid Row.